

while traveling around the country I have had the opportunity to hear Mark Hyman Sinclair Broadcast Group's corporate spokesman deliver commentaries that distort the facts and lie about the issues. On one occasion before the 9/11 Commission finished its deliberations he was trying to discredit it. He made derogatory remarks about it and in my estimation he was insulting commission members, the victims, their families and the American people.

When ABC's Nightline program attempted to honor our fallen servicemen and women, Sinclair said it was political and refused to show it. Now they are forcing their stations to run a prime time phoney documentary disguised as news.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.